Chapter Review
What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy: Telling & Doing
Matt Byrnes

The author makes several good points within this chapter. I like his direct references to story and mechanics from specific games to make his points.

People can learn through play. The author proves this by showing us that we can learn to play these complex and varied games without becoming frustrated because they are well designed. He uses the Tomb Raider game as an example. I particularly liked the part about “learning to be Lara Croft”. We are told to do what the Professor says but we are encouraged to do the opposite by way of the rewards for disobedience.

Also, the player is taken through a ‘sub domain’ where they are encouraged to take on some of the characteristics of the virtual person, call on previous knowledge of the genre and technology, and move through a series of challenges and discoveries where risk is low and basic skills can be overpracticed to ensure solid skills.

The building of a solid fundamental experience in the game shall lead to active learning because games get progressively harder and encourage the player to marry transfer and innovation. They sooner or later find that a routine strategy worked well early on in the game but those strategies will only take you so far and one must learn to be flexible and adapt to the new challenges.

I agree that getting the information needed via multimodal and multiple sources to enable self discovery is a great strategy. Spreading the game manual throughout the game on a “need to know” basis seems to work very well.